

society. The tonic and alternative impressions excited, contribute to the rapid and successful operations of granulation and cicatrization.

*Magnesia as an Antidote to Arsenic.*—Prof. PETER, of Transylvania Univ., in a paper in the *Western Lancet*. (Sept. 1846,) relates some experiments made by him, from which it appears that magnesia is a useful agent in the treatment of poisoning by arsenic, thus confirming the recommendation of Mr. Hume, of London, and others. Mixed with water, and administered continually, and in sufficient quantity, until all the poison is removed from the stomach, it would combine, he says, with the arsenious acid as soon as it became dissolved in the fluid in the stomach, and by withdrawing it immediately from solution, prevent its absorption into the living tissues. Even when the poison is taken in solution, we could doubtless succeed, by the speedy administration of a large quantity of this antidote, in gaining time to remove it from the stomach by the ordinary emetic means.

It is believed to be always desirable to evacuate the stomach freely after the use of any of the antidotes; more especially in poisoning with metallic substances; for, although the poison may, for the time being, be converted into a compound insoluble in water, yet it might not be safe to allow that substance to remain long in contact with the secreted acids of the stomach.

Many persons may be disposed to think that, having in the hydrated peroxide of iron, a good antidote to arsenious acid, it would be folly to throw it aside for another which has not yet been sufficiently submitted to the severe test of experiment on the living subject. But that the compound of iron is not always to be procured in time when it is wanted, and moreover is often inert from the improper manner of its preparation, while magnesia is almost always at hand, and can, generally, be procured in quantity; and it presents a range of antidotal power over various poisons not equaled by any other known substance. It is, therefore, to be strongly recommended as a substitute for the peroxide of iron, when the latter cannot be easily obtained.

*Statistical Researches on Cancer.*—The *Southern Med. and Surg. Journal*, for May last, contains an elaborate paper on this subject by Dr. JOHN LE CONTE. The following are the conclusions he draws from the statistical data he has collected:

1. *Age* is one of the most important elements in the development of cancerous affections. The *absolute* mortality from this cause is greatest between the age of 50 and 60; but the *relative tendency or liability* to the disease,—as deduced from the ratio of deaths to the number *living at each age*,—goes on steadily augmenting, in both sexes, to the 80th year.

2. *Women* are more liable to cancer than men, nearly in the proportion of 3 to 1. This ratio is not materially altered by the slight numerical inequality in the sexes in favour of females.

3. The *frequency* of cancerous affections *appears* to be progressively *increasing* in both France and England. This apparent augmentation is, without doubt, partly owing, to a progressive increase in the *mean duration of human life*, causing a greater number of persons to attain the age which renders them peculiarly obnoxious to the disease. In the Department of the Seine, the increase seems to be confined to the city of Paris. The disease is more frequent in the Department of the Seine than it is in England and Wales nearly the ratio of 4 to 1. No adequate explanation can be given of this striking disparity. About one person dies from cancer to every 22 deaths from phthisis in England; and for every case of the former there are 17 cases of the latter.

4. *Rural Habitation* seems to be unfavourable to the production of carcinoma. Both in London and Paris the proportional mortality is higher than it is in the adjacent country districts. But this may be owing to other circumstances than the influence of habitation.

5. Individuals following agricultural pursuits appear to be less liable to cancer than those employed in manufacturing. However, the data are insufficient to test, in a satisfactory manner, the influence of particular occupations.

6. The influence of the matrimonial condition on the production of carcinomatous affections, cannot be correctly estimated for want of the data requisite for establishing a just comparison.

7. The effect of climate is very doubtful.

8. The mortality from cancerous diseases is at its maximum during the cold season of the year: the inclemency of the weather accelerating the deaths from this cause, as it does in the case of most chronic diseases. The statistics show the influence of season on the *mortality* from cancer, but not on the *production* of the malady.

9. In relation to organs affected, the uterus is most liable to cancer; being attacked in about 32·8 per cent. of the total deaths from the disease in France; the stomach comes next, 25·2 per cent.; then the mamma, 21·7 per cent.; and then the liver, 6·3 per cent., etc.—Among females, the mortality from cancer uteri is about 43 per cent. of the total deaths from the disease in that sex, and the mamma 28·4 per cent. These proportions relate to the mortality from cancerous affections in the Department of the Seine in France.

*Case of Double Consciousness (?)*—Dr. B. F. BERKLEY relates (*Western Journ. of Med. Surg.*, Sept. 1846,) the following very curious case. Mrs. N. B., a married woman, aged 39 years, has been subject to neuralgia of the face for about 17 years. She is otherwise a healthy woman. Five or six years ago the disease became very violent, and assumed a strictly periodical type, returning every two weeks—at which times she suffered the most excruciating agony in the course of the fifth pair of nerves of the right side of the face. After suffering two or three hours in this way, she not unfrequently became sick at the stomach, and would vomit and purge. All these symptoms after a while subsiding, she would become entirely insensible to all external impressions. In this situation she would commence preaching in a loud and clear voice, and continue from two to three hours. She would then sink down as if she had fainted, and in fifteen or twenty minutes awake without the least knowledge of what had transpired.

"She has had these periodical spells of preaching for five or six years, every two weeks regularly, never having missed but two or three times. The case having attracted much attention, Dr. B. was induced to visit the subject of it during one of her attacks, and gave the following account of what he observed. He arrived at 9 o'clock, A. M., and found Mrs. B. sitting in an arm chair, suffering all the agony of a severe attack of facial neuralgia of the right side, though somewhat different from most cases of that disease. There was no twitching of the muscles, great turgescence of the vessels of the face and neck; muscles of the neck very rigid; eyes very red; excessive intolerance of light, so much so, that she could scarcely bear to elevate the eyelids.

"She says she feels an almost insupportable weight, like an incubus upon her head; there is an abundant secretion of saliva, which is altogether from the right side of the mouth. I talked with her for about an hour, or as long as she was capable of talking. I found her a very intelligent woman; she wished to know if there was nothing that would relieve her. I asked her if she had undergone any medical treatment. She said she had; that several eminent physicians had given her medicine. She had been cupped, her head shaved and blistered, ointment of veratria applied to the course of the nerve, and all the most noted antiperiodics, such as arsenic, the preparations of iron, &c., given in succession without the least benefit. She thought that under the tonic treatment she had got worse.

"She continued to get worse and worse from the time I went into the room until about 11 o'clock, when her eyes closed and she became perfectly insensible to external impressions. In this situation she commenced talking.

"She was placed in the sitting posture, in a large room where a great number of strangers had collected. When she first commenced talking, she appeared to be choked with a frothy saliva—but she soon cleared her throat, and preached for two hours and ten minutes, in a clear and distinct voice—sufficiently loud to be heard a hundred yards. She commences in the form of a prayer, but soon changes to preaching, quoting Scripture very fluently, and giving explanations. Sometimes she appears to wander in her mind, and not place her words properly, though this is seldom the case. Sometimes her appeals would be the most pathetic and eloquent I ever heard. The first warning you have that she is about to conclude, is the free spitting up of this frothy saliva. As soon as that appears, she falters and falls over. She continues insensible for fifteen or twenty minutes, all the time